

April 30, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1: 11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I am writing on behalf of my son, Sean Ragland. As I am his mother, I have known him all of his life and most of mine. Thirty eight years ago, I was a freshman in community college, seventeen years old, unmarried, and pregnant. I have never regretted my decision to give birth to Sean. I did make the mistake of marrying his biological father. We were too young for this marriage to ever work, and like many eighteen year old boys, he was not prepared to take on the responsibility of a son and wife. In my divorce proceedings, I reclaimed my maiden name and legally changed Sean's last name to Ragland. Fortunately my parents, Edith and Forest Ragland, allowed Sean and I to live with them while I pursued my Bachelor's degree in biology at Longwood College in Farmville Virginia. I worked full time as a grocery checker at the local super market in my home town to pay for tuition. I received a grant to attend graduate school at Virginia Tech. I had to leave Sean in the capable hands of my parents to make this step, but I was determined to give myself and my son a better future. It was he and I against the world.

While attending graduate school at Virginia Tech, I met Donn Graham Shilling, and he became a father to Sean. We formed a family and Sean came to live with us in Blacksburg when he was old enough to go to kindergarten. It took a little adjustment because Sean missed my Mom and Dad, but he soon loved his life with Donn and I. Sean was with us through our graduate education years at Virginia Tech and N. C. State in Raleigh, NC. We moved to St Louis when Sean was about ten years old. My husband had completed his PhD in Crop Science and taken a job with Monsanto. We soon learned that the corporate world was not where we belonged, and we were thrilled to move our little family to Gainesville FL for my husband to become a professor of Agronomy at the University of Florida. Sean thrived in Gainesville. He enjoyed fishing and going to the beach with his father and I. He sailed through Middle and High School. He got all A's and B's and was very involved in the drama club in High School. He built sets, acted and sang in stage productions of My Fair Lady; Bye, Bye Birdie; and Little Shop of Horrors (among others). He learned to play guitar and has always maintained a love of music. He rode a bicycle to school until his senior year of High School. When Sean began to drive a car his Senior year in High School, he went to work in a lab at the University of Florida preparing lake water samples for gas chromatograph analysis in order to pay for his car insurance and other expenses.

Sean began college at the University of Florida, but he struggled with the demanding work load. He did finally get academic probation. He did not give up on his education, despite this setback. He accepted his responsibility and I made him pay his own way, hoping this would give him more incentive to study and attend class regularly. He worked full time at a chemical analysis lab called

ABC Research in Gainesville FL and began attending Santa Fe Community College. He also met Marlo Ward, his wife. She has been a wonderful influence on Sean and they have a strong, stable marriage. Marlo had already obtained her bachelors degree in English from the University of Florida. They moved on to Orlando Florida where they both worked (he at a small charter airline where he did everything from washing planes to keeping their accounting books, and she as a veterinarian's assistant), until Sean received his bachelor's degree from University of Central Florida. He was twenty eight, but he had finally achieved this milestone and we were very proud of him.

By this time, my husband Donn was the director of the University of Florida's research center at Apopka Florida, just outside of Orlando. We had also added to our family. Sean's first sister, Sara, was born in Gainesville FL when he was fifteen. He doted on his little sister and was a great big brother. We were all devastated when she passed away at the age of nineteen months from a still unidentified genetic disorder. Sean was a great support to me and his dad during this time of loss, and I know it caused him a great deal of sadness. A year after the loss of Sara, we welcomed Amy Graham Shilling to the family and twenty two months later, Ross Graham Shilling was born. Sean has been a wonderful brother to Amy and Ross and they love him. He was always willing to change diapers, give bottles, and later built swing sets and played with them. He is also a good father now to his own son, Kieran Forest Ragland (named for my father Gerald Forest Ragland). Sean is a gentle loving man. He makes friends easily and is fiercely loyal. He loves animals and music. He is completely non-violent and has never owned or will own a gun. His wife and son are vegetarians, and while he enjoys an occasional hamburger, he mostly follows their dietary guidelines. Sean and Marlo have a loving and strong marriage. They will have been married ten years on July 15, 2011, but they have been together longer than that.

We were all pleased when Sean obtained his first job with Taylor, Bean and Whitaker (TBW) in Ocala, Florida. This meant we could all still be close together as a family. Sean and Marlo bought a small modest house in Gainesville FL. This was the first house they had owned, and they moved in with their three rescued dogs. Sean was willing to make the 45 minute drive (one way) to and from work in Ocala, because Marlo wanted to live in Gainesville. The job was challenging for Sean. I believe he was in over his head, and there didn't seem to be any structure to the operating procedures. He tried his best, and I never understood why they kept promoting him to more challenging positions which seemed better suited to people with more experience and credentials. I have an MBA in Finance from Virginia Tech, and thus, at the time, I was never able to understand why this occurred. I have a better understanding now.

Sean was under a great deal of pressure and felt he had to follow the instructions of men like Delton De'Armas: the former Chief Financial Officer of TBW and Paul R. Allen: the subsequent Chief Financial Officer, because they were more qualified and knowledgeable on the accounting procedures. Sean did not feel he had the credentials or experience, nor the confidence, to question these men. By the time he really began to realize things were not right, the pressure of his home life had stepped up with the premature birth of his son, Kieran Forest Ragland, on August 5, 2007. Sean was also concerned for his livelihood and those of his 2000 or so coworkers. He knew that the survival of TBW meant a great deal to them all. He had friends among his co-workers. Finally, he was not interested in any surreptitious financial gain other than his salary.

After TBW, Sean struggled to move on by taking a job in San Antonio Texas with USAA. This meant moving his own little family away from our family, and having to sell his house in Gainesville Florida for less money than he owed, but he was determined to do what was needed for Marlo and

Kieran. He was doing a good job of accounting at USAA, where the business was more "normal" and straight forward than TBW. He had just purchased a new house in San Antonio and was thinking that life was back on track for he and his family when he had to accept the guilty plea.

Sean is perfectly willing to accept the responsibility for his role in the TBW fiasco but I believe that he has already suffered greatly and received significant punishment for his conduct. By pleading guilty, Sean has lost his job at USAA, is struggling to sell his house in San Antonio at a loss to avoid foreclosure, and realizes that he will have to pursue an entirely different career path after serving his time in prison. I am not even sure this will be possible with a felony on his record, but my husband and I are determined to do everything we can to help Sean.

The purpose of this letter is to give you more insight into what a good son, brother, husband and father Sean has been, and to beg the court to show mercy when pronouncing sentence. We are all so saddened and devastated by this event. My mother, Sean's grandmother, is heart-broken, as am I. We hope that the court will show Sean some leniency, so that we can all set about repairing the damage done to all our lives. Please consider that he has a family to support. He also has a three-year old son who needs his father's presence in his life. I apologize for the length of this letter, but I feel this is the most important letter I have written in my life.

I thank you in advance for any consideration you may give Sean.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia K. Ragland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cynthia" being more prominent and the last name "Ragland" following in a similar style.

Cynthia K. Ragland

May 1, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No.1: 11 cr
162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I write this letter on behalf of my son, Sean Ragland, in order to provide you with an understanding of who I am, my relationship with my son, my perception of what has happened to him and ultimately to ask you for leniency when considering his situation. I am presently, Professor and Department Head of Crop and Soil Sciences at the University of Georgia in Athens, Ga.

Although I am not Sean's biological father, we are father and son in the truest sense. We have always been very close and remain so to this day. I met Sean when he was four years old. His mother, Cynthia Ragland, and I met at Virginia Tech while we were both pursuing graduate degrees. We soon fell in love and decided to form a family.

The three of us were a true team. We did everything together. I can still remember Sean squeezed into the tiny back seat of our MGBGT (British sports car) on numerous occasions as we traveled together. Sean was always with us in fun and work. We restored this car together in our spare time. I worked on classic sports cars while in graduate school at VT to help pay for graduate school. After finishing our MS degrees, we moved to Raleigh, NC where I pursued a PhD and Cindy a second graduate degree at North Carolina State University. Sean continued to spend a lot of time with us. As poor graduate students, we could not afford a baby-sitter. I remember working many late nights helping each other to finish our research. Sean would always be with us; many times sleeping on the floor of our laboratory or office. I always involved Sean in everything we did. We worked on cars, fished, and built and flew remote controlled airplanes. He was always a very engaging, curious

and well-behaved boy.

Once we finished our degrees at NCSU, I took a job at Monsanto in St. Louis as a Senior Biological Scientist. Sean and I continued to work and play together as he developed into a young man. I taught him to play golf and ski while we were living in Missouri. We decided that the corporate life was not for us so I accepted a position in Gainesville at the University of Florida as a Professor. Our professional and personal lives changed significantly in Florida. Sean and I spent even more time together. Sean always helped with household responsibilities. We would often do chores together. We also spent a lot of leisure time together fishing, surfing, sailing, camping, golfing and playing baseball. Sean continued to mature as a student and young adult. During this time he also developed a love for music that continues to this day.

I always enjoyed observing Sean interacting with my graduate students and our friends. He has always been a wonderful and engaging person. Sean and I had several agreements that served to enhance his personal development into an adult. He agreed to obtain a job to support the costs associated with car ownership. Sean and I bought and restored his first car together, an MGB (a car very similar to the one that we had restored for his mother when Sean was very young). He came to work for me in my laboratory which proved to be fortuitous. He developed the skills needed to be a quality control chemist. He worked with me and my students on several environmental projects investigating the fate of chemicals. During this period he was a junior and senior in high school. He would later work as a professional chemist using the experience acquired in my laboratory.

He applied and was accepted into the University of Florida. Early on he did fine as a student while working and living at home. However, he began having trouble with the increasing demands of academia and eventually withdrew. He continued to live in Gainesville and worked as a full time professional chemist. We added Amy and Ross to our family while living in Gainesville. Sean has always been a caring and loving brother.

During this time, Sean pursued his interests in music and eventually

met Marlo Ward, his future wife. Marlo had an enriching influence on Sean. They fell in love and were married. Eventually Sean decided to continue his education at the University of Central Florida in Orlando Florida. During this time he continued to work to pay for his education in addition to taking out student loans. I only mention this because he never asked for financial assistance. He wanted to do it on his own. He has always had a strong sense of pride and responsibility. He eventually graduated with a finance degree and was very excited about his first professional position at Taylor, Bean and Whitaker in Ocala Florida.

I was very proud of my son when he became a professional business man and purchased his first home in Gainesville. He commuted 45 minutes each way to work in Ocala because Marlo and Sean wanted to live in Gainesville. Sean would often call me to talk during his commutes. We would talk about our mutual interests and our jobs. Several times we would talk about classic sports cars because there was a dealer that specialized in these types of cars that he passed on his commute.

Over time, Sean seemed to be doing very well in his job. Several promotions and changes in responsibilities occurred over the first few years. I remember Cindy expressing concern about Sean and telling me about increasing pressure on him at work. We felt he was being promoted very quickly and the increasing responsibilities and stress were adversely affecting Sean. In addition to changes at work Sean and Marlo had their first child and our first grand son, Kieran.

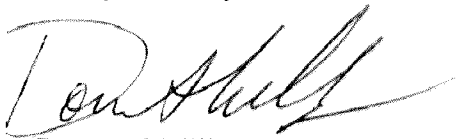
During this time, Sean began to realize that the company was having problems. Several key people left and Sean was having an increasingly difficult time keeping up with the demands of his job. The data base and computer system at TBW that Sean used had limited capabilities. As the economic situation continued to deteriorate, both at TBW and the world, Sean began using his own "shadow accounting" system to try and reconcile his financial concerns. He initially questioned his superiors about the "books" but never got a straight answer. After TBW, he interviewed with USAA in San Antonio and was given a position in their banking division. He moved his family and began his new life. When we talked, he would tell me how great his new job was and how much better the systems were at

USAA. His life was "back on track."

I am not a lawyer, but I have learned and experienced a lot during my life. I believe my son was placed in a true conundrum. Unfortunately, this conundrum had legal consequences. Although I know what Sean did was wrong, I know that he used as a pawn in a huge and complex financial situation. Moreover, Sean is a good person who I believe has already been punished enough. He has lost his job and any prospect of working in his chosen profession ever again. He is in debt with no hope of repayment. His home in Texas is for sale and if not sold soon it will be in foreclosure. We are hopeful that you will be understanding of my son's situation and extend to him leniency. We are hopeful that his family will move in with us soon after this issue is resolved in June. We are also hopeful that Sean will join us soon after his sentencing and begin reshaping his life with our help.

I extend to you my deep appreciation for your time and thoughtful consideration on my son's behalf.

Respectfully,



Donn Shilling

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I write on behalf of my nephew, Sean Ragland. I have known Sean since his birth. He is the oldest child of my youngest sister and was born to her when she was a teenager. His parents married and very quickly divorced so that Sean only lived with his biological father for a few months and has had no further contact with him. His Mom was a college student at the time, having graduated from high school at the age of 17. Sean and his Mom lived with my parents for a number of years while my sister finished college. She went on to receive two master's degrees and to marry a wonderful guy she met while in that process who was working on his PhD. He has been Sean's true father in every sense of that word that counts. Because of that I refer to his step father as his father in this letter.

Sean was a sweet, loving child and gave great joy to my Mother who was his primary caretaker while my sister finished college. Sean never did anything to cause anyone to worry about him getting into any trouble. There was never any hint of drug, alcohol, or smoking problems. He was and is extremely close to his Mom and his father. Sean and his father, Donn Shilling, enjoy such things as fishing, working on cars, etc. together. In fact, the entire family is so convinced that Sean would not knowingly do anything wrong that everyone in the family with the means to help financially has contributed to his defense by providing retainer funds for the two counsel representing him in this matter. Sean's Grandmother is now 91 and the situation with Sean has created a lot of pain and stress for her. She is absolutely convinced that Sean would never knowingly do anything wrong and that this has cost him greatly. Mom is one of the family members who have put up some funds for Sean's defense.

Sean landed the job with Taylor Bean immediately after college as his very first job. When the firm was shut down the trustee/receiver hired Sean to help sort out the mess. From the very beginning of the investigation into what happened, Sean has cooperated with anyone involved in that investigation. He was repeatedly assured he was not a target of any investigation and was moving on to build a life for himself, his wife and his son. Sean's family is everything to him and his primary concern was taking care of his wife, Marlo, and his son, Keiran, who happens to be his pride and joy and who he actually named after his Grandfather by giving him his Grandfather's name, Forest, as his middle name.

In an effort to take care of his family, Sean eventually took the only job he could find after the collapse of Taylor Bean even though it meant moving from Florida to Texas, selling his home in a terrible market and moving away from his parents. He eventually sold the house in Florida at a loss. After a few years

and no action as to him, he decided to buy a house in Texas rather than continue renting. Unfortunately that was mere months before learning he was to be indicted. Now Sean and Marlo are trying disparately to sell that house and it appears it will have to be at a loss. He can't afford to keep it as he was fired from his current job as soon as he entered the plea agreement in this case. It appears that his college degree has been rendered useless by his connection to Taylor Bean and subsequent plea. His degree was in finance and he will never be able to work in that field again with a conviction for bank fraud and wire fraud.

Looking back on all events now, I think Sean can see that things within Taylor Bean were not what they should have been, but at the time he simply lacked the experience to recognize that. Eventually he did realize that something was wrong and started asking questions of his superiors as to how the firm could possibly be profitable. Sean was never a confrontational person so questioning his superiors must have been a difficult thing for him to have done. He now realizes that he should have stood up to them rather than accepting their explanations. He is wiser now and extremely remorseful for not having realized how serious the situation was and how devastating the effect of what was happening at Taylor Bean and his role in it.

The purpose of this letter is merely to help you see the person Sean is and understand that he has been punished already for any wrong he may have done. He never received a dime from any of the fraud committed but has paid dearly through the sale of one house at a loss, the sale of the second house at a loss or the foreclosure on that house, the hurt and damage done to his family which is all important to him , the loss of his chosen career path, and by just in having to call his Grandmother and tell her that he was being charged with crimes of such magnitude and intended to plea guilty. His family is suffering still due to the lack of income as he was the sole support of the family.

Sean has two relatives who are lawyers though not criminal law practitioners. Both my brother, Gerald Ragland, and I are members of the Bar. We are two of the family members who have contributed to Sean's defense funds and who have met with his attorneys in an effort to help him get beyond this current situation. We were both present in the courtroom when Sean entered his plea as was one of Sean's cousins. Right now it appears to Sean that his world is collapsing. We are hopeful that the court will be merciful and allow Sean a chance to get on with retraining for a career and with rebuilding his and his family's life.

Thank you in advance for any consideration you give Sean.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda D. Regenhardt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "L" and "R".

Linda D. Regenhardt, Esq.

June 10, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I am writing on behalf of my nephew, Sean Ragland. Sean is scheduled to be sentenced by you on June 21st. I'm familiar with Sean's present situation as I assisted in obtaining local counsel for him and was present in court both when he entered his plea and when he testified in the recent Lee Farkas trial.

I have been an attorney in good standing for thirty-six years and I am admitted to practice in the Eastern District of Virginia. In fact, I have appeared before your Honor from time to time, mostly back in the nineties when I had occasions to argue civil discovery motions or to represent criminal defendants as appointed counsel. I am a member of the Virginia, D.C., Maryland and Pennsylvania Bars and am admitted to Federal Courts in these jurisdictions, with the exception of Maryland. I have maintained my primary law office in Old Town Alexandria since 1987.

I have known Sean Ragland all of his life as he is my youngest sister's son. Sean, for a few years, was raised by my parents in southern Virginia while his mother was in graduate school at Virginia Tech. I saw him a lot in those years. Once Sean was living outside of Virginia, we maintained the usual family contacts as he grew to adulthood.

As to his present situation, I can only say the family has been dumbfounded by Sean's present circumstances. I will share with you that one of the Federal Agents involved, when he realized I was Sean's uncle, assured me that Sean was not considered one of the "bad guys." I believe this Agent is correct, which raises the question, how did Sean come to be in his present situation? To me the answer is that Sean, like many young men before him, assumed that his bosses knew better than he. Sean, who is extremely non-confrontational, followed the directions of those superior to himself. As we know, this is not a legal defense. Hopefully, it can be a factor to consider in his sentencing.

You will no doubt be concerned that the sentence given Sean on June 21st will adequately punish him. Be assured that no matter the sentence, the punishment already is great. Sean will

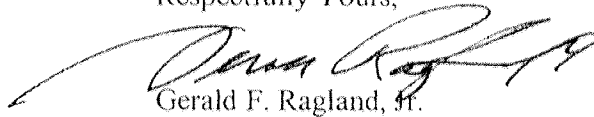
likely never be able to work in jobs which would ordinarily be open to one with his educational background. It will be, in a way, as if his college degree were taken away from him. He will also suffer because his family will suffer. As you know or will know, he has a wife and a very young child and he is presently unemployed as a consequence of his guilty plea.

You will also be concerned that the sentence given Sean provides some assurance that he will be so informed by the outcome in this matter that he never again will come before another judge for any similar offense. To this concern, having known Sean all of his life, and having seen the impact of this case on his life, please allow me to share my belief that this case will be a once in a lifetime occurrence for him. I am convinced that he will never find himself in such a situation again in his life.

When considering the question of Sean's sentence, I hope you will consider that Sean received nothing for his work with Taylor, Bean & Whitaker other than his ordinary pay. Thus, Sean's actions were not motivated by a desire for personal gain or even more so by a corrupt heart.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gerald F. Ragland, Jr.", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the left.

Gerald F. Ragland, Jr.

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,

United States District Judge,

United States District Court,

401 Courthouse Square,

Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

My name is Amy Shilling and I am Sean Ragland's younger sister. I am nineteen-years-old and reside with my parents and younger brother. I am currently a student at the University of Georgia majoring in Anthropology and I also work for a professor on campus. I was a member of the Beta Club in high school, a charity club, and was co-president of the Latin Club.

I have known Sean all my life and he is a wonderful brother. Sean is a very loving and caring person with a loyalty to his family and his friends that runs deep. He always reassures me when we talk about my education or work, telling me how proud he is of me. I have had the honor of being included in many major moments of Sean's life. I remember being a part of the ceremony when he was married and driving with my mother to Florida to see him when his son was born. Throughout the years, I have seen him work hard for his family in order to care for them. Despite these unfortunate circumstances, I am still thankful to be here for him during these trying times. It is my chance to repay him for all that he has given me.

I am writing this letter in order to help Sean in whatever way I can. I understand the difficulties Sean currently faces and will face in the future. I plan to help him in whatever way I can. I will provide support to him and assist in any way possible – that is what he so deserves.

I do wish to ask for Sean's sake, as well as the sake of so many he cares for and who care for him, that he be treated with mercy. He is a truly good person at heart and would never do anything maliciously. Sean is a hard-working man who fills his life with love for others. His dedication to family and friends is something I admire and respect and he is well loved in return. The amount of people who are willing to help him in this time demonstrates that he is a truly wonderful person.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amy Shilling".

Amy Shilling

May 29, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I know that you are very busy, so I appreciate you taking the time to read and consider my letter; I did my best to be brief. I am writing this letter to beg you to choose leniency and compassion for Sean Ragland.

As his wife, I think I'm uniquely qualified to tell you what kind of a person Sean is. We will celebrate our 10th Anniversary this July. I fell in love with Sean because he is the kindest man I have ever met. He has an easy-going personality, he loves playing music and dogs and the outdoors. Sean is an exceedingly gentle man whose life revolves entirely around his family. He is patient with me to a fault, even when I am being unreasonable. He reads to our three year old son Kieran every night of his life. Sometimes I stand at the door while they are reading and just listen to the two of them together. Half of the time they are not reading, but giggling, about something. I hear Sean explaining about music, cars, or sports. Or I hear them talking about Superheroes. When Kieran was born prematurely, Sean spearheaded the creation of an Ambassador Team in Kieran's name with the March of Dimes because he didn't want other families to suffer what we went through. He's the last person in the world to start a conflict, and the guy his friends call when they need someone to lean on, need help moving a couch, or need their car jumpstarted at two in the morning.

I think that perhaps the best testament to Sean's character is how he has handled the devastating process of being charged and pleading to a crime and the terrifying prospect of going to prison. A lesser person could go into a catatonic depression. But not Sean. Throughout this process he has been level-headed and calm. He has been doing everything he can to help my son and I survive this ordeal. Last night, I couldn't stop crying thinking of the violence that Sean could endure in prison, because I don't know how he would survive it. He actually started acting silly and joking around just to cheer me up and make me laugh for a second. That's Sean. In the face of his own life being destroyed, he was concerned with making me feel better, even just for an instant. When charged, he immediately informed his employer, because he wanted to help his company save face; even though he was forced to resign with no chance of unemployment compensation, thus putting us in ever greater financial peril. I also think that how Sean has been spending his time since he was let go from his job is a great testament to what a caring person he is. In addition to the rigors of preparing our house for sale, job searching, and traveling to DC, he has been volunteering at a small animal welfare group that I work with. Instead of wasting time, he is giving back to his community.

Sean is not a bad person. He was caught in a bad circumstance, with corrupt superiors. Please believe me, he was not profiting from any of the questionable practices at Taylor Bean. The whole time he worked there we were living in a tiny house that was literally falling down around us in the bad section of town and driving modest cars.

Before you decide on a sentence I would be grateful if you would consider the ways he has already been punished and has suffered tremendously:

1. He has suffered financially. We are destitute. Sean has no job, and no chance of working in the field he trained for ever again (he just received a letter from the H.U.D. barring him from working in real estate finance), even though he will still owe \$35,000 in student loans. We are cashing in our retirement, and we are up to our eyeballs in credit card debt, desperately trying to sell our house before it goes into foreclosure.
2. He has suffered emotionally/psychologically. Simply the thought of being separated from his son has caused pain beyond words. Sean has suffered devastating humiliation in front of his family, friends and community, and is

racked with fear over the survival of Kieran and me if he goes to prison. He feels like a failure who cannot provide for us. Both his sense of self-worth and his very identity as a husband, father and provider have been destroyed. He is also very angry at himself and ashamed about his part in the fraud. He is a gentle man who never wants to hurt anyone or anything. It disgusts him to think that he hurt anyone.

3. He has suffered physically. Physically, Sean is not a "tough" man. I fear he won't be able to stick up for himself in a prison setting. This stress has brought the return of his asthma, and I fear he may be getting stomach ulcers.

So...I am going to be very bold. ***I would ask you to let all of this suffering be enough punishment.*** I'm asking you to choose compassion, and not put Sean in prison. As a teacher (I taught before Kieran was born and am now going back to school to study Early Childhood Education), just as much of my job is about showing compassion for students as it is about teaching subject matter, even if that student messed up badly. Sometimes, people just need a second chance. When given that second chance, I've seen students turn their whole academic career around. Can you please give Sean the chance to turn his life around? I am asking you to show compassion for Sean because I truly feel that he deserves it, and I believe that there must be a place for compassion in our legal system.

Objectively, it comes down to this question: ***Is the world a better place with Sean in prison or out?*** If he went to prison, it would just cost the government more money; if he were allowed freedom he would be able to contribute to the economy and pay his taxes. If he went to prison, he would eventually emerge as a broken man, putting a further burden on his family and society; if he were allowed freedom, he would be able to begin rebuilding his life. If he went to prison, his son Kieran's life would be forever and horribly damaged; if he were allowed freedom, Sean could continue to be an active and loving father.

Of course, I am also asking you to choose leniency for myself and our three year old son, Kieran. If I could be down on my knees begging, I would. Please, please, please do not subject my son to the shame and trauma and isolation of having a parent in prison. Do not take away his father from him. Kieran is truly an innocent, but he is the one who would be punished the most. All I want for Kieran is to have his loving father in his life, and the stability that two parents can better provide. The idea that Sean could be in prison until Kieran is almost 9 years old, thus making him fatherless during his most crucial developmental period, is almost more than I can endure.

I don't know if it makes a difference to you, but I can also make you this very solemn promise. If you let Sean go with probation only, I will wake up every morning of my life asking myself these questions: How can I be a better wife, a better mother, and a better citizen? I will work always for the greater good, as a condition of having this second chance at a life.

My life is falling apart around me, and you are the one person who can help. We have lost everything – our income with the ending of Sean's job, our home, our retirement, our health insurance, and even our ability to provide for our family in the future; the only thing we have left is each other. Please don't take that away. I am pleading with you with every ounce of my soul... Please choose leniency, please choose compassion, and please give my family a better chance at our future.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

With greatest sincerity,

Marlo Ward

May 29, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I have known Sean Ragland for more than 10 years, and am writing to ask you, as an impartial and experienced individual who is continually asked to make decisions on the character of individuals, to consider the caliber of this man when you are making your decision concerning his life.

My relationship to Sean is mother-in-law which, by the nature of the relationship, could mean in many families a relationship that isn't necessarily good. Quite the contrary, I have watched Sean mature, put himself through college while working full time, take care of his family, take incredible joy at the birth of his son, and simply develop into an amazing man and a contributor to his community in many ways.

As president of my consulting/training company for more than 17 years, my experience and knowledge base lies in being able to ascertain who people are (instead of what they're saying) and therefore how to help them develop, grow, and often change limiting beliefs to be more effective in their careers and lives. I have written four books on human potential and continually coach and consult with corporations on how to determine the character of individuals and how to help them develop.

I mention this because I'm not writing as just a family member who is concerned with Sean's welfare. I'm writing as someone who makes her living understanding the character of people and I can honestly say I would not be writing this letter, regardless of my relationship to Sean, if

I didn't know on a very deep level who he was, what he was capable of doing, and the degree of integrity he possess.

Since I've known Sean he has been a dedicated husband and father, a guy who will help when needed (he has volunteered his time with Shakespeare Animal Fund, a non-profit I founded years ago to pay emergency veterinarian bills for elderly, disabled and other low income individuals) and an extremely hard worker.

I have great respect for the legal system, have many attorney friends and a dear friend who is a recently retired judge. And so I'm asking, within the parameters of the system and what you can do, would you consider allowing Sean to remain out of prison and continue to support his wife and child and be a contributing member to society? I know this decision is entirely in your hands and you always make the best decision under the circumstances. I'm asking you as a judge, as someone who also has a family, and as a person who realizes sometimes people react unwisely not because they are devious or dishonest, simply because they made a poor judgment call. Many of us have acted in ways we later wish we could change, our actions just haven't had the dire consequences of Sean's.

Thank you for reading this letter and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Webb

April 25, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I am Sean Ragland's grandmother, known as "Nanny". I am aware of Sean's pending difficulties and I want to point out to you how well I know Sean and what a great person he is. Sean was born to my youngest daughter (Cindy) while she was still in college. She married his father, but he did not want the responsibility for, nor did he have any interest in a baby, so they divorced. Sean at two months old came to live with me and his Granddaddy, who was a one hundred percent disabled World War II veteran, and confined to a wheelchair most of the time. Sean brought life back into our home as all of our children had grown up and left by then.

Sean's mother, Cindy, continued on in college and received a master's degree in plant pathology from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. There she met and later married Donn Shilling, he was working on a master's degree in the same field. They both received their degrees and moved on to N.C.S. in North Carolina where Cindy received an MBA and Donn received his PHD.

They then took Sean to live with them, and Donn began his career and Cindy became a housewife and Mother. Donn took an interest in Sean from the beginning and they became great companions. He was a wonderful father to Sean and the only one he ever had. Cindy and Donn now have two other children, Amy is in college and Ross is a junior in High School and they both love their older brother, Sean.

When Sean started college, he worked to help pay his expenses; he never smoked or drank and always strived to better himself. I remember one job he had was washing airplanes, He also did lab work. While he was attending University of Central Florida, he met and married Marlo Ward, she has been a good wife for him and they have a little boy (Kieran) of whom they are very proud. When he got his job with Taylor, Bean and Whitaker, fresh out of college, they thought he had it made and they bought a small house in Florida and were doing so well, or so they thought, until all of a sudden his company went down and his world fell apart. He lost his job, but immediately got another job in Texas with USAA and again he was supporting his family and bought another house in Texas. Now his world is about to fall apart again and he will have to start over again, which I have no doubt he will do.

To help him in this endeavor, I respectfully ask that you show him all leniency allowed by law.

I know this letter is getting too long, so I will add just one more note; Sean's Grandfather died in 1995 and I will be 91 years old in July, so this would be the best birthday present ever, to see Sean get a new lease on life.

Sincerely,

Edith Ragland

April 29, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

We are Sean Ragland's grandparents and have known him all his life. We have watched him grow to become a college graduate, productive member of society, husband, and father.

He has been a large part of this family, and can attest to his strong moral character.

I am a retired Navy physician, Gretchen is an artist. We have lived in McLean for 50 years and are active in Charles Wesley Methodist Church here in Mclean- in the choir and a garden for Share.

Sincerely,

Gretchen and Charles Shilling

May 29, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: United States of America v Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema,

My name is Nancy Ragland Thomas and I am writing this letter on behalf of my nephew, Sean Ragland (the son of my youngest sister, Cindy). As the rest of my family, I am very much aware of and concerned about the pending legal difficulties in which Sean has found himself.

His situation came as a shock to the entire family as Sean has never been involved with anything that could even remotely be considered illegal. I have known Sean his entire life and the only way to describe him as a child is "sweet and lovable". He was a good child and well loved by his extended family. I spent a great deal of time with him, especially during the time he was living with my mother and father, Edith and Forest Ragland.

When Sean was a teenager, he and a friend came to the Washington area to visit his Grand Parents, Dr. and Mrs. Shilling. I picked them up to spend some time with them and took them to a music shop down town, because they were interested in music and playing guitars. This is an example of the kind of young man he was, always having healthy interests and never a trouble maker at any point in his life.

As an adult, Sean, the sole provider for his family, is a devoted family man to his wife and son. I have never seen a father more proud of a child than Sean is of his son Kieran. It saddens me greatly to think they may be separated at such an important time in his child's life.

I am a working artist and a partner in The Artists' Gallery located in Chestertown, Maryland. My husband Merrill Thomas is a home builder and we live on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in the small town of Ridgely. We have lived here for the past seventeen years.

As responsible citizens we would like to vouch for Sean's character and to express our sincere hope that you will consider his past, as well as his clean reputation among all who

know and love him, when you pass sentence upon him. We feel he is deserving of leniency as fully as can be dealt within the law as he is a truly good man.

Thank you for considering this petition for leniency.

Sincerely,

Nancy Thomas

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799
Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I appreciate that you are taking the time to consider this letter. My name is Bryann Ramachandra. I am fortunate enough to be a stay-at-home mother to my three year old daughter, provide day care for my two and half year old nephew, and hold a paying data entry position for a Registered Dietician's Diabetes Education program. I am a self-taught vegan chef, have authored a highly trafficked vegan blog, and am an aspiring children's books writer. The moments stolen to draft this letter were precious snippets of time in otherwise chaotic days of child-filled, food-splattered mayhem, so I very much appreciate the time you've taken out of your own busy schedule to read this. Thank you so much for considering what I have to say.

I submit this letter in an effort to best offer my own evaluation of Sean Ragland's character. I have known Sean for seventeen years. Sean is my husband's best friend and was the best man at our wedding almost fourteen years ago. He performed a toast that not only extolled the virtues of the groom but also touched many in his assessment on what makes a good friendship, what makes a good marriage, and how precious love truly is between two people who understand both. People still talk about his toast all these years later. This, I've found, is not something most young men of twenty-four would be good at, but Sean is the exception. He is thoughtful and kind and loving and not afraid to openly be all of those things.

When I met Sean he was struggling financially as we all were in college, working a job that paid very little as a chemist. His clothes were often worn from chemicals used in the lab and his car needed so much tinkering that he often rode his bike across town instead of driving, but he was always there to happily help anyone in need with help moving, a listening ear, or a shoulder to lean on. He's always been one to help me laugh in the face of anything and embraces silly in a way that warms my heart.

When my husband left Florida for flight school, leaving me behind to finish my own schooling, Sean was the friend who would check in with me and make sure I was holding up okay. He was the guy I knew I could call one gloomy day when my car's brakes went out, and he was there in a flash to change them in the rain for nothing more than the satisfaction that a friend was taken care of and could make it to work on time. He'd get me out of the house to see a movie or just spend time reminding me that soon my then fiancé and I would be reunited.

When we moved from our beloved college town to a more bustling city, it was because Sean and his wife Marlo also happened to move to the same city that it became bearable for me to live there. Somehow, living in the same place they do has always made it feel more like home. Over the course of our seventeen year friendship, Sean has been a fixture in my life. His is the house I can go to without notice and drop off my ninety pound yellow menace of a Labrador, who would chew his shoes and dig up his cable, leaving him to come home to my note and her mess, and Sean would be just as excited to see that we'd dropped her off unexpectedly the next time something came up and we needed a dog sitter. We have spent countless meals, picnics in the park, holidays, birthdays,

college championships, and game nights together. Yes, he's that guy who will happily oblige his wife with a weekly game night or trek to a Sing-A-Long movie viewing not just to make her happy, but because he actually enjoys these things. He embraces those he cares about and their interests fully and has always made me feel important and celebrated, respected, and loved. To me, this is a treasured and all too rarely found quality.

I will always hold a particular memory up as a true testament to Sean Ragland's character. We were all gathered in the mountains of Georgia for his wedding. It was the evening before their nuptials, and family and friends were situated around a bonfire, sharing stories, laughs, and reminiscing. I was enjoying the firelight, the closeness, just taking it all in. I didn't realize it at first, but I had been swaying to a beautiful melody that someone was skillfully picking out on a guitar. It was one of those Latin inspired numbers, one that is mellow but manages to still feel lively, one that always makes me wonder how many fingers a guitar player could have that they could strum and pluck such a complex array of sounds with such precision and such fantastic joy. My focus drifted around the circle to find who was delighting my ears with such music and smiled as my eyes rested on Sean and his guitar. If I was surprised at the musician's identity it was only because, for years, I had watched him play music with my husband and our close circle of friends always as the bass player in the background or maybe a little rhythm guitar to accompany the others. I knew he could rock the drums but always let my husband's blossoming new favorite pastime take center stage. I knew he was talented, but only in that moment was I aware of just how very much so. It warmed my heart to know that while he often played the supporting role, when it was just he and his instrument, he shone. It was a beautiful thing for me to learn about our friend.

When his wife delivered their son prematurely, Sean was a pillar of strength and a wealth of positivity in facing his family being tethered to the NICU for a frightful two weeks. He is one of the most even-keeled people I know, always dealing with whatever life throws his way in a thoughtful and calm manner. He shares my love for all things science and engages me in many a tirade about the state of our world and what we can do to make it better. His mind is a wellspring of knowledge on more subjects that I can list here, and he eagerly shares with others what he has learned. My three year old daughter adores her 'Uncle Sean'. He enthusiastically plays his part in her childish games but also speaks to her and to his own son in such a way that not only is their vocabulary extended, but also Sean's zeal for learning about the complex universe in which we live is passed on to them.

I know that despite being the good man I know him to be, Sean has pleaded guilty to one charge of mortgage fraud. I understand this is a serious offence and that his guilty plea means there is no avoiding some punishment, but I also know he feels great remorse for not going about things differently. My own personal perspective stems from the years I spent as a wildlife rehabilitator and environmental educator. I coordinated and supervised community service workers who chose our facility for the purpose of fulfilling their hours. I do not pretend to know what sort of sentencing is typical of the crime that Sean has pleaded guilty to committing, I only offer that having someone like him on those hot summer days when it was just me and a couple of community service workers that showed up to manage our vast compound of often one hundred plus animals would have been the best kind of help for our struggling organization. Instead, I often found myself spending the day with men who proved themselves far less trustworthy or hardworking. Often they were indifferent, lazy, and sometimes just horribly rude and inappropriate. Many times they'd be back for similar offenses that landed them at our door in the first place. I know from our more recent talks that Sean does not intend to ever put himself in a situation such as this again. I know what is most important to Sean has never been money or personal possessions, but rather that his family is safe and cared for, his friends are close, and his community is flourishing. Over the years I have witnessed him work hard to ensure those three things. My knowledge of prison sentences is limited to what I've read and a handful of documentaries, but my greatest fear is that the man I know Sean to be going

in to such a system; kind, patient, fair, enthusiastic and open-minded will not be bettered for spending time there.

Sean, to me, has always embraced and embodied modesty. I have watched him work hard at a job that paid very little because he believed in the work he was doing as a chemist testing the nutrition of foods. I attended and spoke at his beautiful but unpretentious wedding in the mountains because he and his wife elected to surround themselves with nature and simple beauty to celebrate their union. I have witnessed how he raises his son, filling their days with outdoor activities, gatherings of friends, and fun ways to explain to him so much about the world around him that he is curious about because that is who Sean is; involved, invested, and excited to learn from and to teach others. I have lived in the same town as he for years, his own modest home on the poorer side of town, sure, because it's all he could afford, but also chosen because he truly appreciates the beauty and history of the neighborhood.

Recently, we were able to visit with Sean and his family as they traveled to Florida to meet with his lawyers. Even in the face of all that they are currently dealing with, Sean was warm, easy-going, and focused on quality time with family and those of us who gathered to support them. While I could see pain in my friend's eyes behind the smile, the desire to keep things light, to enjoy our time together and find laughter in the middle of such circumstances seemed effortless for him. It was only during our good-byes, away from the children, that he would let down this guard and cry as we held each other, friends for almost two decades, hoping for what lies ahead to be something we will all be able to brave through together, to come out the other end stronger.

I know Sean Ragland to be a loyal friend, a patient father, a dedicated member of his community, a diligent worker, and someone I would trust with my life, my husband, my daughter, and my dog. He has never said anything to me in our seventeen years of close friendship that was unkind or even disrespectful. Not once. He is thoughtful, he is invested in those he loves, and he is one of the most supportive people I have ever known. He is selfless, he is just, and I know he is gravely remorseful for any wrongdoing. I plead with you that all of these things be considered when you decide what sentencing is most fair and most befitting his crime. I truly believe that the world is better, his family is safer, and his friends are more inspired with him as a functioning member of society rather than removed from it.

Sincerely,

Bryann Ramachandra

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

My name is Greg Ramachandra. I have been friends with Sean William Ragland for 17 years. I have been a professional pilot for that duration of time, and I also worked for TBW. I was Lee Farkas's Chief Pilot. Looking back, I now regret ever having urged Farkas to hire Sean as a favor to me. He did. Sean was fresh out of school with a finance degree and while willing to learn on the job was struggling to find a solid position that would allow him to live in Gainesville, the town where he grew up. It was important to him raise his own family here surrounded by friends and a community he embraces.

From the onset, Sean put a great deal of effort into his job and was continually trying to keep up with the ever expanding job description and complexity of the out of control growth in the mortgage business. I was very proud of him. Sean and I have been the type of friends who spend lots of time together. We have a mutual deep love for listening to and creating music, and have shared countless nights jamming and making memories with one another. At least two weekends a month were spent with the Raglands. Our wives are close, our children have played together since birth, and they are easily the best friends and closest people we have in our lives. When my wife and I lost our first child when attempting to start a family, it was the Raglands whom we spent my wife's birthday weekend with soon after. They are the ones who gladly stepped in to be supportive of our sadness while making sure our spirits were lifted and helped us to celebrate life and one another. When their own son was suddenly born prematurely, my wife and I were the first friends to visit them in the hospital to return the favor as it was a very scary time for new parents of a premature newborn. Sean was so positive and amazing to watch while he helped his wife deal with being unable to care for their son the way she'd envisioned she would during her pregnancy. It was very hard on her, but Sean persisted in being loving, kind, and an abundance of support. I was proud to call him friend watching his strength matched only by his tenderness with her. When my own daughter was finally conceived, it was Sean with whom I first wanted to share the news, and his happiness for our family was truly heart-warming.

Whenever my wife and I have been called out of town unexpectedly, Sean is the person I've counted on to sit our dog, check in on our cats and our home, and he has always done so happily, even during the year our dog did her best to destroy everything she came across. Sean never complained, only told the stories of her destruction animatedly among friends to make us laugh at this ridiculous but loving beast. The year I was to be married, Sean did not follow the path of many best men in history and supply all the 'usual' pastimes at bachelor parties, but ensured that mine was centered around the one love I have equal to that for my wife, music. That night of endless music, jam

sessions and laughter with my best male friends I owe, in part, to Sean's planning and executing of a great night and wonderful memory for me.

We have shared conversations that left nothing secret. I divulged any and all information with him, personal and professional, as you would expect a best friend to do. He did the same with me. We commiserated over how poor working conditions were as employees of Farkas and discussed his frustration at how poorly he felt things were being done there, how less and less of it was making sense to him over time. Knowing Sean, if there was some wrongdoing he felt he was responsible for, it would have weighed heavily on his mind. It's easy to read Sean's emotions for he tells you what they are. That is who he is. That Sean did not ever divulge that he thought his actions were illegal only tells me that he must have been truly afraid of what was going on, and it explains why so many of our conversations about work left Sean looking stressed and exhausted.

As I followed the trial I was in shock reading about what Sean was accused of since it was so out of the realm of what I have come to know as normal for his character. I know that he has pleaded guilty to a crime and understand there are consequences to his actions, but that doesn't make the situation any less surreal, that the man I know so well has landed himself in a situation so out of the realm of who he is and has always been to me. Sean was the best man at my wedding. Everything from the toast he gave to the support he has provided myself and my wife since when dealing with schooling, with career changes, unexpected moves, and having children was nothing short of loyal, loving, and given with enthusiasm. It has always been the kind behavior that one would expect from good person and a great friend. He has been a better friend than I could have ever asked for in this life and it is very painful to see my greatest friend dealing with the situation he has gotten himself into. He is the friend to whom I have entrusted the care of my family to in my absence, he is the person who will find a way to make me laugh in my darkest hours and be most supportive through the most trying times, he is the buddy who my daughter loves like her own favorite uncle because he treats her like the most special little girl in the world, and he is the man I trust most with my possessions, my feelings, my loved ones, and my friendship. I hope that in reading this you find what kind of person he is and how he may have arrived at this point in his life, pleading guilty to a count of conspiracy and fraud.

I ask that you grant him leniency in your sentencing. I've known Sean for nearly two decades. Not that anyone does well in prison, but it is true that some do better than others. It is my belief that Sean isn't one of those people. He is not a weak man, but he is not especially hard. He wears his heart on his sleeve, is open and kind. I know he is extremely remorseful for not being more proactive in his work when questions he had were not acceptably answered. I believe the man I know Sean Ragland to be has learned from this ordeal and will be able to make better decisions in his future. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Greg Ramachandra

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I am writing this letter of support for Sean Ragland, who I have known for about 15 years, and to ask for leniency. Sean and I both worked and lived together for years, and he's truly one of the sweetest and most genuinely loving men I've ever known. His hard work in getting himself from where we were when we met to providing for his family and being a great husband and father have been a source of personal inspiration.

Some of my favorite memories of Sean involve when we have been able to sit down and have heart to heart conversations. During these times I have heard him gush, completely honestly, about how and why he loved me. He would recount how far he and I had come, considering we both knew what hardships are like, and how proud he was of me. For men, this is a rare friendship indeed.

I'm aware of the difficulties that he is facing, and what it may mean for his wife Marlo and son Kieran. I feel especially sick for him because I remember how difficult things were when we worked and lived together, and how hard he's worked to provide security for his family. I met Sean working at a laboratory in Gainesville, Florida called ABC Research, where we were lowly lab technicians in the same department, getting hourly wages without benefits.

It turned out that Sean had gone to the high school where my mother taught for many years, and she remembered him from performing as a lead in *Bye Bye Birdie* ("He was really good," she would always say), and we became friends. We were both similar ages, children of educators, and supported ourselves without much outside help.

I remember when Sean used to ride his bike to work every day, even after someone in a car knocked him down and didn't even stop to see if he was okay. Later, we also shared the horrible experience of living in a house that often lacked heat and was infested with roaches, then rats, then flies.

We lived check to check back then, and I recall Sean sharing with me the memory he had of being in a house that lacked heat as a young boy, and telling me that when he got a chance, he'd "never be cold again." I also remember how glowingly he talked about Marlo when he first went on a date with her, and how excited he was that she liked him.

Seeing Sean work his behind off getting his degree in Finance from UCF and then finally driving about 40 minutes each way every single day from Gainesville to Ocala to work was also inspiring to me. Sean is a guy who has had to work for every single thing he's gotten in his life. I remember that he was barely able to grab a bite of lunch at work, and worked long hours, especially during the peak financial times of the year, which somehow seemed to be most of the time.

I am now engaged to be married, and look forward to having children of my own. I can only hope for the joy and love that Sean, Marlo, and Kieran share. I work as an Office Manager for the UF Child Abuse Prevention Project, and have lived in Gainesville for over 30 years, since I was six.

Sincerely Yours,

Malik Grady

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I appreciate the time you are giving to reading the letters of support for one of my dearest friends, Sean Ragland. I would ask that you look at the total of his being as you consider sentencing, and the impact that this sentencing will have on himself and his family and friends. At his very core, Sean is a good person. He is conscientious, truly caring and is a real asset to our society in general.

I am a freelance writer and wine consultant for ABC Fine Wines and Spirits and have been working in retail or restaurants for over twenty years. I write about wine and astrology for Examiner.com, and I write wine blogs for my company and for a small local magazine. I have been a wine educator for over 15 years and teach leisure classes at the University of Florida. My partner is an alcoholic in recovery, and it has taught me that no matter how much you love someone, there are things in life you cannot control, and that life is not always fair. I am politically active and spend time helping our community, where I have lived since I came to Gainesville, Florida to go to college in 1985.

I met Sean about 15 years ago when he started dating one of my closest college friends, Marlo Ward. I was one of the dog walker/ring-bearers at their wedding, and they have been two of my dearest friends, sharing the joy of their union and their child with me and my life partner of 19 years. Sean has always been willing to help out any of his friends. He is the first to help anyone move, or to help with home projects, or to give support during trying times. When I lost my job of ten years, he was one of the first people to support me and come up with real solutions to our daily needs. He has always been open-minded and socially conscious, embracing his wife's vegetarian lifestyle and her eclectic friends. I was there when they could not bring their child, Kieran, home from the hospital, since he was born premature, and I saw Sean stand up as a father to support his son and his special needs and the needs of similar children, devoting time to the cause of premature babies through the March of Dimes. Their daily devotion to their son while he was in the hospital stands as the primary reason he came home a week early. When his wife worked for Gainesville Pet Rescue he tolerated many foster animals, and he even accepted the troubled pit bull mix she adopted whose behavior problems and destructiveness would've caused any other man to abandon the dog. Sean

didn't, showing his devotion to his wife and her causes, and his patience and tolerance in adversity.

When he decided to go to college in Orlando, he worked cleaning airplanes to support his family and to make ends meet when his student loans did not provide enough. He has always been a hard worker, who takes his responsibilities very seriously. I remember the unreasonably long days and nights he would work during the audit periods at Taylor Bean, and as a friend looking at the impact on his wife and son, I felt it was unfair. This was his first job in this field, just out of college, and he was green and eager to please. He wanted to learn from the experts, trusting their word and their policies, since they were the experts. This choice was a grave mistake that I know he now regrets to the core of his very being. His trust was misplaced and now his family will bear the brunt of that choice.

I have been working in retail sales for over twenty years, and have worked for bosses who had strange business practices, but I would never have thought that through ignorance and through trust in supervisors' authority, that I might face the kind of penalties that Sean now faces. The unfairness of his situation, and the impact it has already had on his family, financially and emotionally, is incalculable. They moved to Texas, away from friends and family, so that he could continue in his chosen profession and support his family, not knowing that this circumstance loomed over his life and career in this overwhelming way. I know Sean gained nothing more than merely keeping his job, while others at Taylor Bean clearly made money through dubious practices, knowing full well what they were leading Sean into. Sean was desperately trying to hold on to his job, period, and there were always threats that he might be let go, if he didn't conform to their business practices. Baseline, he had a family to support. I can't say that given his exact situation that I would've acted any differently. He trusted his supervisors who had been in the business for many years to not lead him astray, but they did.

The measure of a man is found in learning from one's mistakes and striving not to repeat them. I know Sean has learned from this process and would never make those same mistakes again. I know he would walk away from a job rather than commit any illegal action, and risk his ability to support his family and to be with his young son, Kieran, who has been living amidst this stress and chaos for the last three years. I cannot describe the cost this has had on his family, yet they still persevere together. Marlo is a paragon in my mind for keeping her sanity while raising a three-year old child during this nightmare. She put her career as a teacher on hold to have more time to raise their young son, and she has been a superb mother, as Sean has been a devoted and doting father, teaching by example and with incredible patience.

Please think with compassion when you look at the specifics of this case and who really had so much to gain, and who were just pawns in others' larger games. I know Sean and

Marlo have already paid a huge financial, professional and personal cost, due to the aftermath of this investigation. I hope you would see Sean as a good candidate for leniency, and I can assure you that he will serve our community much better from the outside of prison, than from the inside. The law is meant to be rigid yet flexible, depending on the circumstances of the transgression. Here is a perfect example that begs for flexibility and compassion after looking at the sum total of the people involved and their subjective circumstances. Human truth is subjective, so please use that subjectivity to be understanding and merciful.

I am not objective. I love Sean, Marlo and Kieran as I love my family, and I hurt knowing what they have suffered and are suffering, and how this job has now ruined their lives, and the lives of so many others who were defrauded. I beg you to be sympathetic and look to the total of his life and not just at this one mistake, where he trusted his employers at face value. I have cried many an evening with Marlo, as she works to face up to these overwhelming trials. I have talked with Sean and I know he feels wretched and remorseful. His chosen career is over, and he must find a completely new way to support his family and to get on with his life. Please give him that head start and give him that chance through mercy and leniency. If there is ever a person who deserves a chance, it is Sean Ragland.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Daniel Brian Eddy

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162,


Dear Judge Brinkema,

My name is Samuel Sprague and I am writing you on behalf of Sean Ragland. I realize Sean has made some serious mistakes recently, but I feel that Sean is a good man, and I do hope you take this under consideration during his sentencing. I have known Sean for 19 years, and I consider him a good friend. I first met Sean in college, and have always been impressed with his generosity, intelligence and humility.

An example of Sean's generosity and willingness to assist others in need is reflected in an act of kindness a few years back. At the time, around 2002, Sean and his wife Marlo had recently purchased their first home, a modest place in an economically downtrodden neighborhood in Gainesville, Florida. As Sean was showing me around his home, we encountered his neighbor, a friendly young African-American man. We talked for a few moments, and returned indoors. Sean told me he had recently given his used car (he had just purchased another used car) to the young man, as this neighbor needed a car for work, but was quite poor and was unable to afford one. Please realize that Sean did not have money to throw around. He needed the \$800.00 or so he could have sold the car for. But his neighbor needed it more. I noted to Sean that I was impressed with his generosity, and he said "You have to pay it forward." Honestly, I did not know what that phrase meant, but after a second's consideration I understood: You have an obligation to help others who are less fortunate, even if it is not convenient or comfortable. I learned about civic unity and selfless giving from Sean Ragland at that moment.

Currently, I live in Melbourne Beach, FL., and I am a physical therapist. I have been a PT for nearly 14 years and I have had the opportunity to work in various places around this country. I was very saddened to learn of Sean's legal issues and wanted to take the time to attempt to explain who Sean Ragland really is to someone who does not know him personally. This is a good man who made a mistake, and I ask you to please consider this during his sentencing.

Thank you,


Samuel Sprague

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I have had the pleasure of knowing Sean Ragland since 1994 when we met during our undergraduate studies at the University of Florida. My best friend dated Sean's best friend so we often spent time together. I was majoring in Chemistry and Sean's love for science was a conversation we often had. He struggled to put himself through school, but this struggle gave him strength of character and taught him perseverance.

Sean is the type of friend that we all aspire to be. He would gladly drop everything he was doing to help a friend in need giving his last dime or even the shirt off of his back. He was always the one you could count on to give an encouraging word when things got tough.

Sean's life changed the day he met Marlo. She is the yin to his yang. Together they have a love for friends and family alike. Many of us traveled out of state to their destination wedding in the mountains. It was beautiful and they were the happiest I have ever seen either of them. This was the beginning of his new life and you could see him glowing with love.

Once Kieran came into his life it changed again. This time you can see that this is what he was meant to be...a father. He is a great dad. He spends quality time with his young son. You can stand back and see how much they adore each other.

I haven't been around as much these last few years because of my career, but I do spend time with them at least once a year. After leaving the University of Florida in 1996, I went on to further my education at Nova Southeastern University. In 2000, I became a doctor of optometry. I went on to do a residency through The Ohio State University. I returned to Florida in July 2001 and have lived in Brevard County ever since. I spent the last 10 years working for an ophthalmology practice that has 7 locations throughout Brevard and Indian River Counties. Even though I am busy with work I still make time to spend with my friends for weddings, baby showers and kid's birthday parties.

I understand Sean is pending trial in your courtroom soon. I hope you will learn he is a good man and offer your leniency.

Sincerely,


Camilla J. Quire, O.D.

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

Thank you so much for taking time to read this plea for compassion. These last few months have been agonizing for Mr. Ragland and his family and friends. Just typing the words "USA v. Sean Ragland" is a true hardship for me. I know Sean to be a patriot and a father who is raising a son to love our country, the spirit of equality, democracy and opportunity that America was founded upon and with a sincere hope for our future as a nation. The thought that the entire country may prosecute such a good man has shaken me to the bone.

I came to the University of Florida in 1990 and was truly gifted with a host of friends that have defined my life ever since. One of my dearest friends, Marlo Ward, had virtually given up on the prospects of true love in her life. She, like many of us, has wounds and traumas in her past that most people could not withstand. Her "Prince Charming" did not come on a white horse or in a pumpkin carriage, but he arrived nonetheless. Sean Ragland was and is humble, compassionate, and ever-seeking to grow true love of his own. Sean is a bandage to her soul, a salve to her heart. As much as I adore Marlo Ward, my affection for her is no match for the dedication and love that Sean has shown her. This is only one of the reasons I love him so much myself. Please do not take this wonderful man from her; this will never serve Justice.

As a gay man who has suffered psycho-sexual trauma at various points in my life, I don't trust heterosexual men very much. Sean gives me hope; he allows me to be myself. He always supports a comfortable environment for my partner and me to express our love (holding hands, public kisses, etc.), and shows mutual affection to each of us without hesitation—a big Sean hug is priceless. I have been placed into many situations where parents have been hesitant to allow children to be around me, for no reason I can think of except my sexual orientation. In Sean's case, his son, Kieran, is encouraged to call me "Uncle Robbie," this is a gift I can never discount or take for granted. It is a joy to be a part of this family. This family is so full of love and beauty and promise, do not tear them apart, please.

Sean is an amazing Father! Sean is teaching Kieran, even at his age of three, how to be a strong, good man. He nourishes his son's mind and heart. He is very much like the father that I wish I had growing up. During my own times of difficulty, Sean has been a source of calm, fatherly advice – deep compassion and meaningful words of encouragement have guided me through hospitalization, rehabilitation, and difficult recovery. Sean is a paragon of strength to both myself and to my partner; a real father-by-proxy to those of us with biological fathers who are absent. This is not even mentioning the fact that he is an ultimate Mr. Fixit – always willing to help and always with the right answers and tools to do the job.

Keeping this family intact is paramount in my mind. Marlo Ward continues to reach out to children by advancing her education degrees. She is an excellent teacher and can contribute so much more with the confidence that her loving husband is at home caring for their wonderful child – they are a truly AMAZING family. This family is regarded as a hub in their social network; without Sean they could never offer the support to the broader community that they have worked so hard to be a part of.

In the most pragmatic terms, a house arrest would allow so much more rehabilitation for everyone involved. I grieve at the prospect of his son, Kieran, being without a father– no grandmother, uncle, cousin or babysitter can compare to the presence of a wonderful father like Sean. Please consider the true nature of Justice as you wield your gavel. Mr. Ragland has only wants to do the best things for his family and society at large.

This is a man with whom I would trust with my very life; he has a wife beside him whom I love dearly and to whom he shows love eagerly and easily. In Sean's presence, his son, whom we all hold so very dear, can grow to be a man to serve our nation and his family very well. Kieran is a gift to us all, please do not leave him fatherless! What is a "son" without a "father"?

Mr. Ragland is a good man, and deserves to be a contributor to society, not sequestered from it. He is an amazing man, offering love and energy from his very core to me and my family and to his own; incarceration will only hurt everyone and help no one. Please find the most Just and Fair end to this matter. Sean William Ragland has suffered greatly, his internal punishment is secured; he is already punishing himself terribly. There is nothing that a detention system can offer him. Sean is already putting himself through the following:

Professional ruin: check

Personal shame: check

Humility: check

Introspection: check

Contrition: check

Regard for social morality: check

He will bear this as a lifelong sentence, need there be more?

With Deep Respect and Sincerity,

Robert Sipes II

May 11, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

Thank you for taking time to consider my feelings toward Sean Ragland.

Sean and I first met in 1994 in Gainesville, Florida while we were both pursuing undergraduate studies. As college roommates, we found commonality in our circumstances and interests. We both had little to no financial support for our college educations, nor did our respective parents push us toward any specific vocational preference. On this clean slate, we "figured it out", sometimes the long way. Through the college years, I recall Sean always holding down jobs while pursuing his academic studies in tandem, which included extensive work in science, music and ultimately, finance. Sean and I formed our strongest bonds over our shared passion for music, jazz in particular, and our love of animals (Sean became a second parent to my pet Labrador) and the outdoors. Sean is proficient on a number of musical instruments, and he has studied and played in a wide variety of styles. Since we first met in college, Sean has been a groomsman in my wedding and a highly valued friend for roughly 17 years.

I was absolutely stunned to learn of Sean's current situation, particularly because the claims made against him run completely counter to the person I have always known him to be. Sean is one of the most compassionate, sensitive people I have ever met. To a fault, Sean has always put others' interests before his own. While this selfless quality has earned him many friends, I can also appreciate how Sean's unwavering loyalty could be manipulated.

I find it extremely difficult to believe that Sean had any criminal intent. I know him too well. I have never known Sean to define his self-worth in material rewards. He has a classic "Type B" personality: easy-going and patient. He is a natural teacher who loves seeing people benefit from his knowledge. He is not heavily ego-driven, and I have never known him to sacrifice his ethics or integrity for any personal gain. Sean's self-worth has always been defined by the relationships he has built with family and friends around him and the experience and knowledge he has gained in life. These are his priorities, not status or money, and despite his current circumstances, he will always be a huge success in my eyes. He has been a tremendous friend to me.

Having witnessed Sean's hard work and perseverance take him to a point in life where he can feel some well-deserved pride in having established himself in a career and as a worthy father and husband, it is especially painful to see these efforts stripped and his pride turn to humiliation.

Please consider my plea to grant leniency to my dear friend, Sean Ragland. The emotional and financial consequences of his guilty plea have been substantial to Sean and his family. His family has suffered greatly, and the road ahead is uncertain. He will have extreme difficulty ever working within the financial industry again and will need to find new ways to support his family. Sean is no danger to society; I sincerely believe that he is a genuinely good person who was put in an atrocious situation engineered by real criminals.

Thank you again for considering my perspective. I plan to show further support by attending Sean's sentencing in June.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Ellis", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeff Ellis

As brief personal background, I have lived in the Tampa Bay area of Florida for most of my life. I have been happily married for 11 years and am the proud parent of two wonderful boys, ages 8 and 4. I have pursued a career in investment banking, and in 2004 co-founded a successful healthcare-focused mergers and acquisitions advisory firm, Crosstree Capital Partners, which I continue to manage. I hold a BS in Finance with minors in Philosophy and Religion, a MBA, Series 62 and 24 licenses and I am a Chartered Financial Analyst.

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court, 401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

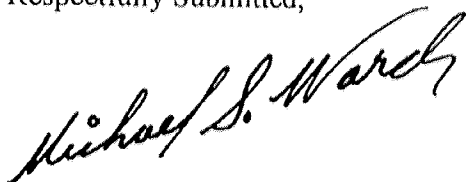
Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and consider its contents. I know that there must be a large volume of material for you to review in regard to this case, so I will endeavor to keep this letter brief and to the point. I first met Mr. Sean Ragland approximately 10 years ago, prior to his marriage to my sister, Marlo Ward. In all of the interactions that I have had with Sean over the years he has always showed himself to be level headed, honest and a good family man. I was therefore shocked and truly disappointed to learn of Sean's involvement in this case.

I have been involved with law enforcement the majority of my adult working life and as such I believe that all people need to take personal responsibility for their actions and be held accountable for any misconduct. There must be consequences for illicit and inappropriate behavior; this must apply to all people including my brother in law, Sean. I have no firsthand knowledge of this incident and I am not familiar with the facts of this case; however, it is my understanding that it is universally accepted that Sean received no personal financial benefit or gain for his involvement in this case. I believe that this more than any other issue should be considered a mitigating factor in determining the appropriate sentence for Sean. It appears that Sean became involved in a situation over his head and made a series of bad decisions. While this does not excuse his behavior, I believe that it is in stark contrast to those who were motivated by personal financial gain.

Independent of whatever sentence and or sanctions that you impose, please understand that there have already been serious negative consequences that have affected Sean, his wife and son. Because of Sean's involvement in this case he was terminated from his most recent employer. More significantly is the fact that Sean has permanently lost the ability to earn an income and support his family in his chosen career field, the mortgage industry. Sean and Marlo have had to put their home up for sale since my sister does not have the ability to generate an income sufficient to meet their mortgage obligation. As a consequence of this situation my sister has made the decision to return to college in order to prepare to support herself and her son.

While determining the appropriate sentence for Sean, please take the following factors into account: Sean received no personal financial benefit for his actions; to my knowledge he has no previous criminal record, both Sean and his family have already felt the consequences of his actions and he is a married man with a young son.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael S. Warch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "W".

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I would like to share a few thoughts I have regarding Sean Ragland. I am Sean's uncle and have watched Sean grow from a child into a responsible adult. He has always been a sincere, honest and hardworking person. He is a loving, caring father, husband, family member and citizen. One of Sean's strengths is his honesty. Sean has always been seen as one that could be trusted and depended upon. I knew Sean when he worked in University labs and he was always enthusiastic about working hard, helping others and being a trusted member of his work team. I have also seen Sean interact with his friends, family and peers, and has the respect of all of them. I have no doubt about Sean's integrity as a person, family member, friend, employee and citizen.

Following is some background information on me. I am 53 years old, have lived in Fort Collins, Colorado for 20 years, I have an engineering background and have worked in large corporations steadily for over 30 years, 27 of them with Hewlett Packard. I have been married for 25 years and we have two daughters, both attending college. I have always been active in my community serving on a local community college board and in my homeowners associations.

I hope this letter helps to support my belief in Sean's integrity as a citizen.

Best Regards,

Charlie Shilling

May 19, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I am writing to you in support of one of my dearest friends, Sean William Ragland. Sean is perhaps one of the kindest, most gentle souls I have encountered over my 40 years. I count it a blessing and joy to have had him in my life for the almost two decades we have known each other.

Sean has made his way in this world through tireless efforts to create a good life for himself and now, most importantly, his family. A decade ago, I was proud to serve as the officiant at the wedding of my two closest friends, Sean and his wife Marlo. Several years later, I witnessed with them another amazing milestone in their lives, the birth of their son Kieran. I lived with Sean and Marlo at different points throughout the years and have seen day in, day out the kind of person Sean is. I am proud to count him as a part of my chosen family.

Sean is a wonderful father and husband. He is a dedicated friend and talented musician - a trait he greatly looks forward to teaching his son as he grows up. He has been active in supporting animal rescue causes for years, helping to foster and save the lives of countless animals including several still in their home today. He is a gifted scientist with years of experience working in both agricultural and food sciences. He enjoys working with his hands and is skilled at repairing almost anything mechanical. His friends, neighbors and family are always the richer with his many skills ready and available anytime needed.

He is a devoted father to his three year old son and you can see the love they have for each other in every interaction. I think of the two of them together in the evenings getting ready for bed. Sean is always there to read to his son every night. Having grown up in a home without a father, I know what a blessing it is to have this kind of support for a child as they grow.

As a human services professional and educator, I have worked with diverse individuals looking to change their circumstances for the better. For many, starting over can be a daunting task. I know Sean possesses the strength and abilities necessary to overcome his current circumstances. He put himself through school. He has worked multiple jobs to support his family. He makes time daily to spend time with his wife and child no matter how tired. And, he is always there to support his friends.

In short, his family, his friends and society as a whole would not be served by Sean's incarceration. I would humbly ask the court for probation in Sean's case. Sean is neither violent or a danger to others. In fact, he is the exact opposite. Sean has made his way on his own much of his life. Given the opportunity, he will make his way again working as a productive member of society. He will work hard every day to remake his life and create a future where his family and those around him will grow and thrive - that is the kind of person I know my friend to be yesterday, today and in the future.

I thank you for your time to read this letter. I plan to be present for his sentencing hearing.

Carin Reppert Turner
Director, ARC Broward Learning Institute

May 19, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I am writing to you in support of one of my dear friends, Sean William Ragland. I have known Sean over a decade after I began dating my wife in 2001. We quickly became friends and have shared a variety of activities such as family outings, sports and travel over the years.

I have known Sean to be a prudent, conscientious, hardworking and a caring person. He has worked very hard throughout the time I have known him to establish himself, and his family. Almost four years ago, my wife and I were on hand for the birth of their premature son, Kieran. Despite the challenges of having a preemie, Sean was a rock for his family, providing the support his wife needed to help them through this difficult time while their son was in the hospital.

I have witnessed how very proud Sean is of his family. One of my first memories of Sean was the efforts he took to create a future for himself and his family. I remember Sean driving to work forty-five minutes a day each way in a car with over 200,000 miles and no air conditioning (in Florida) to ensure that he had a job that could help him build a future for he and his family.

He is a wonderful musician and has been active in supporting those around him. He has worked with the March of Dimes and animal rescue organizations during the time I have known him. He is the kind of person that friends and neighbors can always count on for assistance. His presence is always a benefit to others with his knowledge of cars, electronics and the sciences make him an amazing resource. He is patient to a fault, and has provided me excellent support and advice over the years. He has always been easy-going, loving dogs and the outdoors, and - most importantly - his wife and young son.

Taking Sean away from his family will in all likelihood destroy him and his family. It is

my understanding that prison terms are laid down to those that either lead a criminal life style and or those that show that rehabilitation is needed. Sean is not that person. He is not violent or a danger to others. But, placing Sean in such an environment with the negative influences of prison will change him in ways I fear he may never recover from.

I request that you please consider leniency and I ask the court for probation in Sean's case. He has the ability and determination needed to overcome these circumstances if given the chance.

I thank you for your time to read this letter. I plan to be present for his sentencing hearing.

Jonathan Frederick Turner
Lead Programmer, Wilen Direct

May 17th, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge,
United States District Court,
401 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799.

Re: United States of America v. Sean Ragland, Docket No. 1:11cr162,

Dear Judge Brinkema:

My name is Chris Hairston and today I write to you on behalf of my friend, Sean Ragland. As a Gainesville resident for the past 8 years, I have had the pleasure of knowing Sean and his wife Marlo for most of my tenure here. I have been lucky in that the circle of friends I have come to be a part of is eclectic, warm, welcoming, peaceful, intelligent, and forthright. Nowhere is this spirit more evident than in the character of Sean Ragland.

I am a terribly shy person – and very often anxious in social situations. While I realize this is not about me, this is really the point of my letter today. Sean is the most open-hearted and open-minded person I have ever met. He is selfless and kind, and gives all of himself in every situation. He is passionate and compassionate in his home life, his music, with his family and friends, and in his work. He is trusting of other people almost to his fault. He gives each moment his best because he expects nothing less than the best from others. It might seem a little naïve, but he only sees the good in others. I have never felt more easily welcomed by another person, and the only anxiety I have now is from thinking he might be sent to prison.

Sean is a good man and he is already feeling loss, hardship, and guilt. Every day he spends with his wife and child is a gift, and he spends that time falling in love with them over and over again hoping that's the right thing to do; the right way to be. He pays for his guilt with his conscience and with his own anxieties. Not just now, but for the rest of his life. I'm telling you all of this because I'm going to ask you to be lenient with his sentencing. I'm going to ask you this because there is no set of circumstances in which I can live with myself having not asked.

To thank you at this point would be to assume things to which I will not directly be privy. To express my sincerity only restates the obvious. The only thing left for me to do is to ask you, kindly, to please hand in a lenient sentence for Sean. It is my hope that such a sentence would include no jail time and still be appropriate under the law. I wouldn't ask for that if I didn't believe that it was the right thing to do.

Respectfully,

Chris Hairston

May 31, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

I am writing to you on behalf of Sean Ragland, a good friend of mine who is facing a perilous future due to his situation.

I met Sean about 10 years ago. He was dating Marlo, now his wife. Marlo and my partner had been friends since college, and both Sean and I were quickly and happily absorbed into a close knit group of friends. As I watched their relationship bloom during frequent visits to Florida, I could see that they were destined to remain together for life.

Sean is a caring, considerate and thoughtful husband and father. I remember a trip to a butterfly exhibit with Sean, Marlo and Kieran, their son. Butterflies would land on and near Kieran, who, as a rambunctious toddler, was tempted to reach out and grab them. Sean was amazing in the way he patiently explained to his son that these were very delicate creatures that would be hurt if he touched even the tiniest bit. Kieran quickly understood and would stare at them with great intensity, but he never touched.

I have lived in New York City for the past 14 years. I am an Executive Assistant with a financial services company, supporting the General Counsel and Deputy Counsel, as well as providing general assistance to the entire Legal and Compliance team.

I fully understand the seriousness of the charges against Sean. But I feel with the loss of his reputation, his job, and his ability to provide for his family that he has suffered more than enough. Certainly more than I myself could bear. Please, your Honor, don't take from him all that he has left: the comfort of his family and friends.

Sincerely,

Derrick Toney

May 17, 2011

The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema
United States District Judge
United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*, Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter in reference to Sean Ragland. I understand that Sean is to be sentenced for a crime to which he plea bargained. It is not for me to judge Sean's activities, but as his friend of nearly 10 years it is my responsibility to speak up for him at this point.

Sean is an accepting, warm, compassionate man. Because of his trusting nature, Sean is on the short list of people that I know I can call upon if I need help. He is loyal, kind, and generous.

With these views of Sean's personality I beg you to be lenient in your sentencing of him, for you will not only be sentencing Sean, but his wife and son as well. If Sean were to serve prison time, his son would be sentenced to the loss of this incredibly positive role model while Marlo would be sentenced to trying to explain to their son why his dear father was taken from him.

The punishment that Sean and his family have already dealt with suitably fits the crime to which Sean pleaded. Knowing that he will never again be able to use his degree to support his family in the way that he always planned, and spiraling into the huge financial straits that his family has is punishment enough. Please sentence Sean to only probation so that he can help earn money to keep his family above water, and so that his son will always know him as the gentle, passionate, loving man that he is.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Sharon Emery

► The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema,
United States District Judge

United States District Court
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5799

Re: *United States of America v. Sean Ragland*,
Docket No. 1:11cr162

Dear Judge Brinkema:

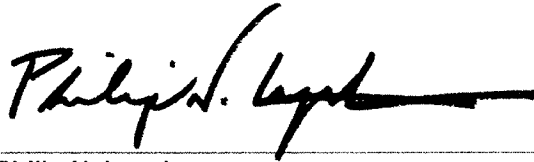
I am aware of Mr. Ragland's situation, and am writing to share my observations and experiences of his character. I got to know Sean over 10 years ago when he began dating his wife, Marlo, another close friend I've known for more than 20 years.

I quickly appreciated Sean's kindness, sense of humor, and warmth. Sean, Marlo, and their son, Kieran, visited me at my vacation home in Jacksonville Beach, FL not too long ago and his love for his son and family couldn't have been clearer. The joy I saw as he played with Kieran in the sand and surf was one of those moments that leaves an indelible impression.

I've lived in New York for the last 15 years, and have worked for a global professional services firm for 12 of them. I am currently the Northeast Area Director of Enterprise Support, overseeing internal services for 8,000 employees.

I hope your honor finds these insights helpful as you consider Sean's sentence, and I ask for leniency on his, and his family's, behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip N. Lynch", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Philip N. Lynch
6/1/2011
